

Billericay Rural District Council.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH. FOR THE YEAR 1926.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE BILLERICAY RURAL
DISTRICT COUNCIL.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,—

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report on the health and Sanitary circumstances of your district for the year 1926.

The Report this year is an Ordinary one.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area : 48,919 acres exclusive of the area covered by water.

Population : Census 1921, 24,257. Estimated for 1926, 31,120.

Number of Inhabited Houses : 1921, 5,194

Number of Families or Separate Occupiers : 1921, 6,297.

Rateable Value : £162,886.

Sum Represented by a Penny Rate : £597 16s. 9d.

Agriculture, particularly dairy farming, is still an important industry, but each year this district becomes more and more a residential one for workers of all classes from the unskilled labourer to the commercial magnate, who find their daily toil outside the boundaries of this district and very largely in London.

VITAL STATISTICS.

		M.	F.		Totals
Births	{ Legitimate }	277	225	...	502
	{ Illegitimate }	11	14	...	25

The total number of births registered in 1926 was 527, giving a birth rate of 16.82 (R.G.).

The estimated population on which the birth rate is calculated, is 31,120 (R.G.).

The birth rate in 1925 was 18.5 calculated on a population of 27,810 (R.G.).

Deaths	M.	F.
	159	150

The estimated population on which the death rate is calculated is 31,120 (R.G.).

The death rate is 9.9 (R.G.).

The death rate in 1925 was 10.6, calculated on a population of 27,610 (R.G.).

Number of women dying in, or in consequence of childbirth :

From Sepsis.....	2
„ Other causes.....	3

Deaths of Infants under one year of age per 1,000 births :—

Legitimate...25	Illegitimate...5	Total...30
Infantile Mortality Rate		56.92

Deaths from Measles (all ages)..... 2

Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)..... nil

Deaths from Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age)..... nil

No special cases of sickness of invalidity occurred during the year. There were 49 deaths from Cancer in the district, giving a death rate of 1.57 per 1,000 against a death rate of 1.59 per 1,000 for 1925.

Deaths at various ages during 1926.

Age							No. of Deaths
Under one year ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	26
1 and under 2 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
2 „ „ 5 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
5 „ „ 15 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
15 „ „ 25 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
25 „ „ 45 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	37
45 „ „ 65 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	77
65 and upwards ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	145
Total							314

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR.

Disease	Total Notified	Admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Smallpox	nil	—	—
Scarlet Fever	53	44	—
Diphtheria	26	19	1
Enteric (and Paratyphoid)	1	1	—
Puerperal Fever	4	1	—
Pneumonia	11	3	1
Chickenpox	30	—	—
Erysipelas	6	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	—	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	—	—
Totals	113 138	68	2

TABLE SHOWING THE PRINCIPAL ZYMOTIC DISEASES
OCCURRING IN THE RESPECTIVE PARISHES.

	Puerp. Sept.	Pneu- monia	Diph.	Erys.	Scarlet Fever	Chicken pox.	Opt. Neon.	Para- typhoid
South Weald.....	1	4	4	2	23	4	1	
Shenfield	1	4	7		12			
Hutton		1	1	1	3	1		
Mountnessing			1		4			
Great Burstead.....	1	1	3			2		1
Laindon	1	1	4	1	6		1	
Wickford						13		
Pitsea					2	5		
Vange			3					
Bowers Gifford					1	1		
Newenden						1		
Ingrave				1	1			
East Horndon				1		1		
Downham						2		
Lee Chapel.....			1					
Ramsden Bellhouse...			1		1			
Ramsden Heath			1					
TOTALS ...	4	11	26	6	53	30	2	1

One case of Poliomyelitis at Vange.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Age Period	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary	
	M	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0								
1			1				1	1
5	1							
10	1			1				1
15	3			1		1		
20	2		1			1		
25	6	7	2		3	1		
35	9	1			1			
45	3	1			1			
55					1	3		1
65 and upwards.....		2			1			
Age not given.....	3	3						
TOTALS ...	28	14	4	2	7	6	1	3

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

Hospitals. This Authority has an Isolation Hospital at Gooseberry Green in which there are 22 beds, divided up into 2 Wards of 8 beds each and 6 one bed cubicles. This Hospital also serves the Brentwood Urban District. It has been used continuously during the year. It is on the Telephone, and the Medical Superintendent is also on the Telephone.

The Staff consists of a Matron, one general fever trained staff nurse, one fever trained nurse, and three uncertificated assistant nurses. Miss Hackney, who had been Matron for a number of years, died at the Hospital in the early Summer. The Council, after duly advertising the post, appointed Miss Cobley as Matron. This Authority has agreed to take in Infectious cases from neighbouring Rural Districts into their Hospital as accommodation is available, and during the year use was made of this facility by the Rochford Rural District Council.

No. 2 Smallpox. This Authority has an agreement with the West Ham Borough Council, by which any cases of Smallpox which occur in this District are taken into the Smallpox Hospital at Orsett.

No. 3 Tuberculosis. There are no special Tuberculosis Hospitals in this District. There is a specially built Pavillion of 12 beds at the Poor Law Institution into which Tuberculosis cases are admitted.

No. 4 Maternity. The only Maternity Hospital in this area is the Maternity Department of the Poor Law Institution Hospital.

No. 5 Children. No special Hospitals for Children exist in this District.

No. 6 Other Hospitals. The Brentwood Cottage Hospital is a general Hospital of 20 beds and is supported by voluntary contributions. There is a Military Hospital at Warley Barracks which is for the use of the Military only. The Mental Hospital in South Weald Parish is one of the County Mental Hospitals, and can accommodate about 2,000 inmates. The Guardians of the Billericay Union have a General Hospital at their Institution which has 56 beds inclusive of the Tuberculosis Pavillion. The new Hospital which the Guardians are building is nearing completion and will be opened during the year 1927.

There is no institutional provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants, or homeless children, other than the Poor Law Institution at Billericay.

Ambulance Facilities. (a) **FOR INFECTIOUS CASES.** This Authority has a Motor Ambulance which is kept at its Isolation Hospital at Gooseberry Green for all infectious cases.

(b) **NON-INFECTIOUS AND ACCIDENT CASES.** The Guardians of the Billericay Union have a horse ambulance stationed at the Poor

Law Institution which is used for bringing in cases into their Hospital. The British Red Cross Society, Essex Branch, have an Ambulance stationed at Brentwood which is available on payment for all non-infectious cases.

Clinics and Treatment Centres. The Maternity and Child Welfare work is controlled directly by the County Council who send their Health Visitor and Medical Officers to the Clinics and also enlist the services of the District Nurses. The following Centres exist :—

Billericay	held at	The Women's Institute twice a month.
S. Weald	„	The Village Hall, Brook Street.
S. Weald	„	The Parochial Hall, Junction Road, twice a month.
Ramsden Bellhouse	„	The Club Room, Ramsden Heath, once a month.
Laindon	„	Manor Hall, once a month.
Wickford	„	Mission Hall, once a month.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

Medical Officer of Health	Dr. J. D. Wells, O.B.E., part time officer.
Sanitary Inspector	Mr. S. J. Shelley.
Surveyor	Mr. H. B. Mayhew, F.I.A.S.
Assistant Surveyor	Mr. E. Simpkin.
Building Inspector	Mr. T. G. Gozzett, Stud. Inst. C.E.
Building Inspector	Mr. H. Reeve, M.S.I.

Professional Nursing in the Home. (a) General. Many of the Parishes or combinations of Parishes have Voluntary Nursing Associations which are largely supported by voluntary contributions in their respective areas, and which provide a nurse for their area. These Associations are not under the jurisdiction of the Rural District Council although the Council subscribes to the funds of some of these Associations. The County Council supervises the work of these Nurses, and gives a grant towards the Nurses' salaries. These Nurses are generally used for Maternity Work, but their services are available for other types of cases which are non-infectious, as far as their duties as Midwives permit.

(b) There is no provision for Home Nursing of infectious diseases in this district.

There are thirteen Midwives practising in the district who are recognised by the County Council and towards whose salaries the County Council make a grant. They are all doing admirable work throughout the district.

Chemical and Bacteriological Work. Chemical Analyses when required, are done by the County Analyst, Dr. Bernard Dyer, Bacteriological investigations are done by the County Bacteriologist, Dr. John F. Beale at his laboratory at Queen Victoria Street, London. There were no cases which required Chemical analyses during the year, 250 bacteriological examinations were made against a total of 192 in the year 1925.

Number of Specimens submitted to the County Public Health Laboratory from the Billericay Rural District during the year ended 31st December, 1926.

Specimen				Number examined
Diphtheria	...	...	...	162
Sputa	...	...	...	73
Typhoid	...	...	...	8
Ringworm	...	...	...	4
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	3
				<hr/> 250 <hr/>

LEGISLATION ACTS IN FORCE.

Urban Powers under Public Health Act, 1875, sections 169.

(Part District) 2nd and 3rd paragraphs and section 170 in respect to Slaughter Houses.

Urban Powers under Public Health Act, 1875, sections 157 and 158.

(Part District) with respect to air space, drainage, water closets, etc.

(Whole of District) Public Health Act (Amendment Act), 1890, section 23 and section 157 of P.H. Act, 1875.

(Whole of District) Public Health Act (Amendment Act), 1890, part III. as far as applicable.

(Whole of District) Infectious Diseases Notification Act, 1889. Housing Act came into force 1st July, 1925.

Public Health Act, 1925.

Powers Conferred September 15th (Whole District) Public Health Act, 1875, sections 112 and 113.

Whole District. Public Health Act (Amendment Act), 1907.

Part II. except sections 18, 19, 21, 26, 28 and 30 to 32 inclusive. Part III. except 39 to 42 inclusive, 47 and 50.

Part IV. section 95, sections 39 to 42 inclusive, comprised in Part III. in the contributory places of Great Burstead, Hutton, Mountnessing, Shenfield, and the South Weald and Shenfield special drainage district. Section 19 as regards

portion of Mount Avenue and Roundwood Avenue, Hutton, Tanfield Drive, Billericay, and the Chase, Brentwood.
 July 17. Great Burstead. Private Streets Works Acts, 1892.
 Public Health Acts (Amendment Act), 1907, section 19.

BYE-LAWS.

- I. Bye-laws with respect to "Slaughter Houses" adopted by Council, 2nd July, 1912, allowed by Local Government Board, 19th August, 1912.
- II. Bye-laws with respect to "Tents, Vans, Sheds and Similar Structures" adopted by Council 27th July, 1915, allowed by Local Government Board, 30th September, 1915.
- III. Bye-laws with respect to "Nuisances" adopted by Council, 18th July, 1922, allowed by the Ministry of Health, 3rd October, 1922.
- IV. Bye-laws with respect to "New Streets and Buildings," adopted by Council, 27th February, 1923, allowed by the Ministry of Health 18th April, 1923.
- V. Bye-laws in respect of "Lodging Houses" adopted 1886.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

No. 1 Water. No special extension of the Water mains were done during the year 1926, but a number of additional houses were connected to the mains.

Rivers and Streams. The Pollution of the River Crouch at Wickford due to too great an impurity in the effluent from the Wickford Sewage Works, has had much consideration. These Works at Wickford were originally designed for a smaller population than that making use of them to-day, and the Works have in consequence failed. The only course to be taken now is the construction of a new, larger, and more modern system for dealing with the sewage, and at the same time to provide for draining a bigger area of this Parish. Building development has proceeded and is proceeding rapidly in and around this Parish. Several building estates have been laid out and built upon. At the 1911 Census the population of Wickford Parish was 576, at the 1921 Census it was 1,475, and at the present time the estimated population is 2,095.

The Ministry of Health held an official enquiry on August 18th into the Scheme which had been put forward by this Parish.

There had been a difference of opinion between this Authority and the Parish Council of Wickford as to which was the most suitable scheme. The Parish Council prevailed and their scheme was put forward. This scheme was turned down by the Ministry of Health because it did not drain a large enough area and did not allow for the drainage from some of the building estates now being developed. A further amended scheme is now under consideration.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

Great Burstead. The Sewerage System with outfall works at Outwood Common has been almost completed and will be in full use during the next year.

This system drains the Sunnymede Estate and is so devised that a very large part of Great Burstead Parish which cannot be drained into the present Billericay drainage system, can be drained into this new one. It also allows for extension where building development is taking place, or is likely to take place.

Owing to the financial failure of the Syndicate which originally owned and built this estate, the agreement made by this Council with that Syndicate is not likely to be carried out. Therefore, the cost of this scheme will be a greater burden on the ratepayers than was originally anticipated.

Hutton. In 1913/14 a sewerage scheme for Hutton was under consideration, but owing to the War was dropped. This scheme has now been revived, revised, and extended, and put forward officially to the Ministry. An enquiry was held on this scheme during the year.

At the present there are three small systems draining parts of the Parish of Hutton, one of which drains a part of Shenfield Parish. None of these three systems are satisfactory, and all are old and old-fashioned.

The biggest of them, the Wynbarns one, has annually cost this Authority a considerable sum of money to keep it in condition.

The new scheme would do away with the small systems Collins Farm and Dames Hole, and drain all of the built up portion of the parish into the Wynbarns Works. These works would last for a time, but ere long a bigger outfall works would be necessary. The Ministry turned down the scheme put forward on the ground that its cost was very heavy for the number of houses and the population provided for. I am in agreement with the Ministry over this. A bigger scheme which should drain a part of Shenfield Parish in addition to Hutton, is required, and the expense of this scheme should be borne proportionately by Hutton and Shenfield.

In addition to that part of Shenfield which already drains into the Wynbarns Works, there has been considerable building development in Shenfield Parish, and during the year the Shenfield Place Estate was put up for sale and most of it bought for building development.

A sewerage system is necessary for the Parish of Hutton, and a considerable part of the Parish of Shenfield could, and should, drain into it, and it would be better to do away with all the three existing outfall works including Wynbarns, and put down at once the

proposed new outfall works at the junction of Havering Grove brook and the River Wid.

One thing is certain, if no scheme of any sort is sanctioned, much money will be required to re-condition the outfall works at present existing at Collins Farm and Dames Hole.

Laindon and Lee Chapel. This part of the district is still being rapidly built over. New houses and shops of all sorts and sizes are continually being erected. A very large number of these have no means of disposal of their sewage water other than into the roadside ditch. A Sewerage scheme for this part of the district becomes more urgently necessary as each year goes by. I referred in detail to this scheme in my last year's Annual Report, and I have nothing to add to this except that the need is greater than when I wrote that Report.

SCHOOLS.

The Public Elementary Schools, twenty-six in number, have all been visited during the year. The new School at Ramsden Crays was taken into use at the early part of the year. The new School to be built for Nevendon in the Burnt Mills Road has been begun, and I anticipate it will be open for use during 1927. It is well planned, airy and well lighted, and will be a good type of School building.

The County Education Authority has acquired a site at Laindon along the side of the high road for a new School. The site chosen is not the best one which was available. It is on a main road which gets a very great deal of motor traffic up and down it, and this constitutes a danger to the children running out from the School. The site is low-lying, and in the winter very wet indeed. A good bridge is required to make entrances and exits across the wide ditch in the roadside, thus adding to the expense of the School.

Additional Class-Rooms are being built at Great Burstead and Pitsea Council Schools to endeavour to obviate the over-crowding which has been very marked for several years.

North Benfleet School. The conditions here are no better than they were when I reported on this School last year.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

Only a small portion of this district is provided with a water carriage sewage disposal system. Consequently there are many closets of the conservancy type still in existence either pail, earth or chemical closets. In some parts of the district there is a main water supply available and in use but no sewerage system. In such cases cesspools are in use for waste water. I have found that in such parts it is better to have a chemical closet than a water one

as the cesspools fill up quickly and the emptying of them is a difficult and unsatisfactory thing, on account of the lack of garden ground available in so many cases for pumping the cesspool contents on to, and also because of the fact that much of the soil is heavy London clay with very little power of absorption and generally water-logged for many months in the year.

Number of closets converted to the water carriage system during the year..... 8

Approximate number of each type of closet :—

Water closets	...	...	...	3,631
Earth, pail or chemical...	...	...	...	4,012
Privy	...	...	...	20

Scavenging. The collection and removal of house refuse is done by contract (the contractors finding their own vehicle, in most cases properly covered dust carts), in the Parishes of South Weald, Shenfield, part of Mountnessing, part of Wickford, and throughout the whole of Hutton Parish with the exception of Poplar Schools and Cressey's Farm.

More care and better method is now used in dealing with the disposal of this refuse at the main dumps. It is there sorted and screened on arrival, the coarser material burned, the finer screenings being taken away for use in brickfields.

In the parishes of East Horndon and Ingrave, there is a collection of night soil.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

A classified statement of the number of premises visited, the defects or nuisances discovered, and the action and result of action taken in regard to these :—

(a) The number and nature of inspections made during the year 1,370

(b) The number of notices served during the year :—
Statutory ... 109 Informal ... 71

NOTICES SERVED.

	Statutory.	Informal.	Complied with.	Outstanding
Houses and Vans, etc.	92	43	112	23
Workshops	2	—	2	—
Dairies and Cowsheds	10	5	14	1
Meat Regulations	—	10	10	—
Nuisances	5	13	15	3
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	109	71	153	27
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Four summonses were taken out during the year, three convictions with penalties obtained.

Slaughter Houses. There are 19 Registered or Licensed Slaughter Houses in the District.

PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS WHICH CAN BE CONTROLLED BY BYE-LAWS OR REGULATIONS.

Tents, Vans and Sheds used for human habitation.

Forty Inspections of such have been made during the year. Eighteen notices were served requiring the provision of Sanitary conveniences and water supplies or receptacles. Twelve notices were complied with, two structures were closed, the other vans being moved away by the Owners. At present there are no Bye-laws in force in the district with respect to houses let in lodgings.

Milk Supply. There are now 152 farmers in this District who produce milk for sale, either for the Wholesale or Retail trade. Three new Wholesale Producers have been registered and three new Wholesale and Retail Producers during the year. Eight new retailers have also been registered during the year. The cowsheds and dairies have all been inspected several times. I note a further improvement in the cleanliness of the methods of milk production. I want to see a more general use of clean overalls including a washable cap, and a more general grooming of the cows. In nearly every case the udders are now groomed either by the wet or dry process before each milking, but the cow's flank against which the milker's head rubs is not generally groomed, and the cow's tail is often forgotten in the grooming. I want to see an efficient process of steam sterilisation for all churns, pails, bottles and milk stools in use in every dairy farm. Many retailers bottle some, or all of their milk on their own premises, largely because they are finding that the public demand bottled milk believing it to be less contaminated than milk drawn out of the churn at their own door into their own jugs, but I have seen retailers, or their agents, collect empty bottles from one house, fill them from the churn on the road, take a loose disc out of a grubby pocket and with grubby fingers fit it on to the bottle. This may delude the purchaser, but it does not make for cleanliness in milk.

HOUSING.

Number of new houses erected during the year :—

(a)	Total (including numbers given separately under (b))	748
(b)	With State assistance under the Housing Acts	371
	(i.) by the Local Authority	nil
	(ii.) by other bodies or persons	371

1. Unfit Dwelling Houses.

INSPECTION—

(1)	Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	...	...	...	...	...	665
(2)	Number of dwelling houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	...	...	...	...	...	219
(3)	Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	...	...	...	...	...	16
(4)	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation.	...	...	...	...	...	157

2. Remedy of defects without Service of Formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	42
---	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	----

3. Action under Statutory Powers.

A. Proceedings under Section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925 :—

(1)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...	...	...	...	44
(2)	Number of dwelling houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—					
	(a) By Owners	...	...	...	...	35
	(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	...	...	...	...	nil
(3)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close	...	...	...	...	nil

B. Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—

(1)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	...	...	...	69
(2)	Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—					
	(a) By Owners	...	...	...	...	60
	(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	...	...	...	...	nil

C. Proceedings under Sections 11, 14, and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925.

(1)	Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders	5
(2)	Number of dwelling houses, in respect of which Closing Orders were made	4
(3)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling houses having been rendered fit	nil
(4)	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which demolition orders were made	nil
(5)	Number of dwelling houses demolished in pursuance of demolition orders... ..	nil

I append a tabulated statement giving details of the number of houses erected in the various parishes during the year. It will be noticed that in Laindon and Lee Chapel 207 new houses have been erected. This is, I think, an added reason why a drainage scheme for that area should be considered and arranged for. Little Warley had no new houses built and yet Little Warley is a parish which requires at least 10 cottages for working men. The new Act for re-conditioning rural houses has been passed, and there are scattered throughout this district a very considerable number of houses to which this Act can apply. I can give as an instance, the parish of Little Warley again where there are a number of 2 or 3 roomed houses which are in fair condition, but which are not big enough to house the occupants and which could be made reasonable and sanitary by the addition of another room or two. But for all the number of new houses which have been erected, this district is still very badly in want of houses for the labouring class which can be let at a rental of from 6/- to 8/6.

NUMBER OF NEW HOUSES ERECTED DURING THE YEAR.

In the Parish of Basildon	20
„ Bowers Gifford	7
„ Childerditch	2
„ Downham	15
„ Dunton	17
„ East Horndon	1
„ Great Burstead	57
„ Hutton	34
„ Ingrave	15

In the Parish of Laindon	...	...	...	164
„ Lec Chapel	...	...	...	43
„ Little Burstead	...	...	...	17
„ Little Warley	...	...	...	nil
„ Mountnessing	...	...	...	25
„ Nevendon	...	...	...	6
„ North Benfleet	...	...	...	6
„ Pitsea	...	...	...	93
„ Ramsden Bellhouse	...	...	...	13
„ Ramsden Crays	...	...	...	10
„ Shenfield	...	...	...	20
„ South Weald	...	...	...	36
„ Vange	...	...	...	67
„ West Horndon	...	...	...	nil
„ Wickford	...	...	...	80
Total				748

INSPECTION OF FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES

INCLUDING INSPECTIONS MADE BY SANITARY INSPECTORS OR
INSPECTORS OF NUISANCES.

Premises	Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
Factories (including Factory Laundries)	2	nil	nil
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	19	5	nil

DEFECTS FOUND.

	Found	Remedied
Want of Cleanliness	2	2
Other Nuisances	3	3

I am, Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

J. DOUGLAS WELLS, O.B.E., M.B.,